

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are presented for further examination. Claims 1, 2, 9, and 14 have been amended.

In the final Office Action mailed July 6, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,884,350 (“Kurze”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,102,476 (“May et al.”). Claims 1-3, 6-9, and 14-19 were rejected as obvious over Kurze in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,092,868 (“Wynn”). Claims 1-19 were rejected as obvious over European Patent 584439 (“Castellini”) in view of May et al. Claims 1-3, 6-9, and 14-19 were rejected as obvious over Castellini in view of Wynn.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the bases for the rejections and requests reconsideration and further examination of the claims.

Kurze, U.S. Patent No. 5,884,350, describes a chair designed to automatically position a patient at a preprogrammed height and orientation for a dental worker. Thus, a dental worker approaching a patient in the chair merely needs to enter the appropriate commands (either a keyboard, touch screen, or verbally into a microphone) and the chair positions the patient at the correct height and orientation for the dental worker and for the procedure. There is a standard overhead lamp 42 on an arm positioned above the chair. Kurze does not describe or suggest a display screen.

May et al., as previously argued, is a multi-media chair that does not show an intraoral operatory light integrally formed with a monitor or suspended over the chair to illuminate a user’s mouth while providing an unobstructed viewing of the monitor and unobstructed access to the user’s mouth for dental procedures.

Claim 1 is directed to a chair-side multimedia communication system for use by dental staff and a patient in a dental chair, the system including a display screen having at least one intraoral operatory light, the display screen positioned to provide light into the patient’s mouth while allowing the dental staff to have access to the patient’s mouth without interference from the display screen and to give the patient unobstructed viewing of the display screen. Claim 1 further recites an armrest controller coupled to the display screen, directional speakers in a headrest coupled to the controller, and software configured to provide access to a computer

network to enable patient navigation and dental staff access and management of information on a network.

The combination of Kurze and May et al. fails to disclose each and every feature of claim 1. May discloses a chair that does not use an intraoral operatory light integrally formed with display screen console. Kurze, as previously discussed, does not disclose or suggest a display screen console having an integral intraoral operatory light. Rather, Kurze merely discloses the standard overhead lamp on an arm positioned above the chair. There is no teaching or suggestion in either May et al. or Kurze of the need to have an intraoral operatory light integrally formed with a display screen console.

Moreover, May et al. teach in Figures 1 and 3 mounting the monitor 44 and keyboard 45 on the armrest in a position that interferes with access to a patient's mouth. The proximity of the monitor to the headrest does not provide the necessary access to a patient's mouth to perform dental procedures. Figure 2 teaches swinging the monitor out away from the headrest to point in a direction that makes it not viewable by a user. May et al. never contemplated using their game chair as a dental chair for performing dental procedures. In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-19 are clearly allowable over the combination of Kurze and May et al.

Wynn, U.S. Patent No. 6,092,868, describes a computer workstation in which the monitor 24 is positioned directly in front of the user, either from a side arm 25 (Figures 1-2) or an overhead arm 25 (Figure 4). In either case, the monitor 24 as shown would not be appropriate for a dental chair because it would interfere with access to the patient. In addition, Wynn does not describe or suggest an intraoral operatory light associated with the monitor. Thus, any combination of Kurze and Wynn would clearly fall short of the claimed system as described above.

More particularly, independent claims 1, 2, 9, and 14 all recite the display screen with intraoral operatory light suspended to provide unobstructed viewing of the display screen by the patient and to provide light into the patient's mouth without interfering with access to the patient's mouth by the dental staff for performing a dental procedure. In particular, claim 14 recites illuminating the inside of a patient's mouth for performing a dental procedure when the

patient is in the chair. Clearly, the structure of Wynn would not allow a dental procedure to be performed when the intraoral light is illuminating the inside of the patient's mouth because of the mounting position taught by Wynn. Moreover, neither Kurze nor Wynn teach or suggest an intraoral lamp integrally formed with a display screen. For these reasons, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-3, 6-9, and 14-19 are not taught or suggested by the combination of Kurze and Wynn.

Castellini, European Patent 584439, shows a dental surgery apparatus of "conventional design" (see Abstract) having an EKG fitted thereon. There is a first arm 30 that supports a lamp 8 and a second arm 7 that supports a console. In all of his design variations, Castellini always has the lamp on a separate arm and never associated with a monitor or display device. Thus, any combination of Castellini with May et al. or Wynn, as these references were described above, would fall short of the various embodiments set forth in claims 1-19.

In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in this application are now in condition for allowance. In the event the Examiner finds minor informalities that can be resolved by telephone conference, the Examiner is urged to contact applicant's undersigned representative by telephone at (206) 622-4900 in order to expeditiously resolve prosecution of this application. Consequently, early and favorable action allowing these claims and passing this case to issuance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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